

ANNUAL REPORT of the MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

TO THE

LUDGVAN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1906.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Report for the year 1906.

During the year there were 51 births (26 male and 25 female) registered, giving a birth rate of 22·47 per 1,000 per annum, a little lower than last year, but higher than the previous four years.

The deaths within the district were 32 (20 males and 12 females), giving a death rate of 14·07, a little lower than the average.

There were 12 deaths under one year, the infantile death rate per 1,000 births was 215·68, being higher than the average. Ten deaths were 63 years and over. The zymotic death rate was 1·75; this last was made up by four deaths from Summer Diarrhœa. The natural increase was 19.

The notifiable diseases for the year were six in number, viz.—five from Erysipelas and one from Diphtheria, giving a rate of 2·63 per 1,000 of population; this being the same as last year.

Deaths classified according to age periods.

	All ages	0—1	1—5	5—15	15—25	25—65	65 upwards
1906	32	12	0	1	1	8	10
1905	41	5	3	2	3	12	16

It will be observed that the deaths taking place before the age of twelve months are more than usual.

Causes of Death.

	0—1	1—5	5—15	15—25	25—65	65 upwards	All ages
Phthisis	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Other Tubercular diseases	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Heart disease	...	...	...	...	2	1	3
Nerve disease	1	...	...	...	3	...	4
Convulsions	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
Pneumonia	...	...	1	...	...	1	2
Bronchitis	3	...	...	...	...	...	3
Senile decay	...	...	...	...	...	6	6
Premature birth	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
Cerebral hæmorrhage	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Cancer	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Diarrhœa and Sickness	4	...	...	...	...	...	4
Other causes	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
	12	...	1	1	8	10	32

No deaths took place from Scarlet fever, Diphtheria, Typhoid fever, Erysipelas, or other Septic diseases.

Inspection of the District.

During the year I have periodically inspected all parts of the district. Four new houses were added at Long Rock; one house was repaired and put in proper

sanitary condition. No cases of overcrowding were discovered. The interior of the houses are clean, and in most cases the yards are in the same condition, but some were polluted with slops and household refuse.

Cottages are mostly old, but in a fair structural condition, some having very little space around. There are a few houses still without closets, but the number is growing less each year; 35 new closets were added during 1906. This addition is especially to be observed at New Town and Castle Gate.

Sewerage and Drainage.

Seeing that there is no recognised drainage for the district, I cannot report on any improvement or make any mention of any new schemes, and I cannot see that in such a scattered district as this is that any system of drainage could be carried out, and I consider that the present arrangements answer very well under the circumstances. There are a few slop-drains, but most of the slop-water is thrown on the land; in a few cases there is trouble with the slop-water, especially at White Cross, where there is often an accumulation in front of the cottages.

The district is supplied with cesspits and pail closets, the excrement being thrown on the land; this answers very well generally, as in most cases the houses have gardens attached to them. The streams running through the different localities carry away much of the surface drainage, but there is not enough refuse to pollute the streams so as to create a nuisance.

There are still in many parts of the district old walls and out-houses which are a danger to life owing to their tottering condition, and also by their preventing the circulation of air, so important to the smaller cottages. Even in this matter there has been an improvement during the year, as in a few instances old walls have been removed.

The manure heaps which are still made up on the waste plots by the roadside in many localities, I have nothing new to report on. These are placed and removed during the winter season; they consist of stable manure and seaweed. The only period that these could be considered a nuisance occurs during the removal of the manure to the fields. But even if these heaps were erected on the inside of the hedge, instead of on the outside, there would be the same disagreeable smell in the vicinity during their removal.

In this broccoli growing district large quantities of manure are used, and the smell arising from it is unpleasant during the short time it is being disturbed, but I cannot trace a case of sickness that can be attributed to these heaps.

Water Supply.

The water supply is, on the whole, good. The weak spots at the beginning of the year were New Town, Nancledra, and Ludgvan Church Town. I am glad to be able to report that we hope that the trouble with the New Town water is now over. A good protection has been built around this well, preventing any danger from surface drainage.

Town refuse in the shape of old tins were deposited in a pond within the vicinity of the New Town well, the distance from the well to the pool being about 100 feet. A meeting on the spot, made up of a deputation from the Penzance and Ludgvan Councils, after discussion came to the conclusion that there was no danger to the well, but to be certain your Council decided to

wait until the rainy season was at its height, so that it could be seen whether any surface water could make its way from the pool to the well in question. If any danger to the supply is suspected, all carriage of tins, etc., to this pool will be stopped.

Nancledra is in the same position as far as its water supply is concerned, and I cannot see that much can be done considering the small number of houses (19) supplied, but if care is exercised in the treatment of the stream there ought to be no danger. Complaints have been again made as to contamination of this water from a killing-house about 150 feet from the stream. Any proof of contamination in this manner ought to be seriously considered, and action taken by your Council.

Ludgvn Church Town water supply is not satisfactory. The "Shoot" did not this year quite run dry, but great inconvenience was occasioned by the inhabitants having to wait a considerable time to fill their vessels from this pipe, the stream having fallen to very small dimensions.

The supply of water to the two schools is inadequate to their requirements. The Church school is entirely without water, and the Board school (at the time I visited it) in the same condition, the tank from which they get their small supply of water was quite empty and the tap removed. Many of the children attending these schools come from a distance, and during the dinner interval must require water for drinking and hand-washing purposes. As I pointed out in my last report we have in these schools an average of 250 children left without any proper water supply.

There has been no case for the year that required isolation or disinfection; the one case of diphtheria was of the mildest possible character.

A cottage could be procured in case of a serious outbreak. No doubt arrangements could be made with joining Authorities for the use of a disinfecting apparatus if required.

I have made several visits to the dairies of the district, especially to those that retail milk; they are well kept, the utensils, buildings, and surroundings being in a sanitary condition.

I append forms duly filled.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

H. RUSSELL PHILLIPS.

to the Library

British Medical Association.